

Message Text

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PAGE 01 TOKYO 00509 131230Z

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ACTION STR-04

INFO OCT-01 EA-07 ISO-00 AGR-05 FEA-01 CEA-01 CIAE-00

COME-00 DODE-00 EB-07 FRB-03 H-02 INR-07 INT-05 L-03

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DEPT PASS AGRICULTURE FOR HUME AND FITZSIMMONDS

E.O. 11652: N/A

TAGS: ETRD, EAGR, JA

SUBJECT: CITRUS/FUNGICIDES: ASST. SEC BELL DISCUSSIONS

REF: STATE 005945

1. SUMMARY: ASST SEC BELL MET WITH OFFICIALS MIN HEALTH & WELFARE (MHW) IN AM JAN 13 RE SUBJECT PROBLEM. MTG HELD IN ATMOSPHERE OF COOPERATION. MR BELL STATED HE COULD NOT OVER-EMPHASIZE IMPORTANCE OF GETTING EARLIEST POSSIBLE SOLUTION TO SUBJECT PROBLEM. MHW EXPLAINED VIRTUAL IMPOSSIBILITY UNDER CURRENT JAPANESE LAW OF APPROVING USE OF OPP/TBZ WITHOUT RECOMMENDATION FROM FOOD SANITATION INVESTIGATION COUNCIL (FSIC) AND THAT FSIC CANNOT OFFICIALLY CONSIDER QUESTION WITHOUT MUTAGENICITY DATA. MHW ALSO EXHIBITED UNDERSTANDING OF U.S. POSITION INCLUDING RELUCTANCE TO DO MUTAGENICITY RESEARCH. THEY (MHW) THEN EXPLAINED THAT REQUIRED RESEARCH WILL BE DONE BY AGRIC CHEMICAL RESIDUE RESEARCH INSTITUTE (ACRRI) HERE IN JAPAN AS SOON AS POSSIBLE. DR SHIRASU, MEMBER FSIC AND DIRECTOR TOXICOLOGY SECTION SAID INSTITUTE NOW IN U.S. TO CONSULT WITH U.S. SCIENTISTS ON RESEARCH. SENSITIVITY OF ISSUE SUCH THAT BOTH

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PAGE 02 TOKYO 00509 131230Z

SIDES AGREED TO DO ALL POSSIBLE TO KEEP IT OUT OF PRESS. MIN

AGRIC AND FORESTRY OFFICIALS HAVE CONFIDED TO AGATT AND BELL PARTY THAT RESEARCH WILL TAKE THREE TO FOUR MONTHS AND THAT EXPERTS IN JAPAN ARE FULLY CONFIDENT THAT RESULTS WILL BE FAVORABLE TO FINAL APPROVAL OF OPP/TBZ. RESEARCH ACTION WILL OBVIATE PROPOSED U.S. TECHNICAL EXPERTS TEAM TO JAPAN. MHW SEEMS FEEL (WITH APPARENT GOOD REASON) THAT SUCH TEAM VISIT WOULD TEND TO INCREASE CHANCES OF ISSUE BEING BLOWN UP IN PRESS AGAIN TO DISAPPOINTMENT OF ALL DESIRING EARLY SOLUTION. END SUMMARY.

2. DIR GEN MATSUURA LED DISCUSSION ON MHW SIDE. HE EXPLAINED NECESSITY OF DATA RE NEED AND SAFETY OF ALL PROPOSED NEW FOOD ADDITIVES. DATA RE SAFETY, HE EXPLAINED, MUST INCLUDE DATA RE (A) ACUTE TOXICITY, (B) CHRONIC TOXICITY, (C) CARCINOGENICITY AND (D) MUTAGENICITY. U.S. SIDE HAS SUPPLIED ALL BUT MUTAGENICITY DATA. MHW CANNOT PRESENT ISSUE TO FSIC W/O SAID DATA. SINCE U.S.-SIDE CANNOT FURNISH SAID DATA, MATSUURA EXPLAINED, AN INDEPENDENT RESEARCH INSTITUTE (ACRRI) WILL DEVELOP THE NEEDED DATA WHICH CAN THEN BE USED BY MHW BEFORE FSIC. ACRI HAS EXCELLENT REPUTATION AND RESULTS OF THIS RESEARCH WILL BE VERY RELIABLE, ACCORDING TO MATSUURA.

3. MR BELL ASKED HOW LONG SAID RESEARCH WOULD TAKE. MATSUURA REPLIED THAT SINCE RESEARCH PLAN IS NOW ONLY IN DEVELOPMENT STAGE HE WAS NOT IN POSITION TO MAKE ANY FIRM STATEMENTS ON THAT POINT ALTHOUGH HE WAS CERTAIN THE TIME REQUIRED WOULD NOT BE MEASURED IN YEARS.

FYI: IN INFORMAL DISCUSSIONS WITH MAF OFFICIALS JAN 12, AGATT LEARNED THAT ACRRI PLANNING TO USE RATS IN RESEARCH BUT STILL IT WILL TAKE ONLY THREE TO FOUR MONTHS TO COMPLETE.

4. MR BELL ASKED IF THIS APPROACH WOULD ELIMINATE NEED FOR TECHNICAL TEAM TO VISIT JAPAN (SEE REFTEL). MATSUURA REPLIED IT WOULD. SINCE CURRENT JAPANESE LAW (INDIRECTLY) AND REGULATIONS (DIRECTLY VIA SO CALLED PROVISIONAL STANDARDS) REQUIRE MUTAGENICITY DATA BEFORE FSIC CAN CONSIDER ISSUE, A DISCUSSION BETWEEN EXPERTS RE THE VALIDITY OF REQUIRING SUCH DATA WOULD NOT HELP SITUATION BUT MAY RESULT IN "MINUS" PROGRESS IF TEAM VISIT SHOULD KINDLE INTEREST OF JAPANESE PRESS.

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PAGE 03 TOKYO 00509 131230Z

5. MATSUURA CONFIRMED MR BELL'S UNDERSTANDING THAT A MEMBER OF FSIC (DR SHIRASU) IS IN U.S. NOW CONSULTING WITH U.S. SCIENTISTS RE PROPOSED RESEARCH. HE (MATSUURA) STATED WITH EMPHASIS THAT THIS SCIENTIST (SHIRASU) IS NOT ONLY MEMBER OF FSIC BUT ALSO HEAT TOXICOLOGY SECTION OF INSTITUTE THAT WILL DO RESEARCH.

6. FYI: IN INFORMAL SIDE DISCUSSIONS JAN 12, A TOP MAF OFFICIAL EXPLAINED TO AGATT THAT HE AND ANOTHER HIGH RANKING OFFICIAL (MAF) HAD PERSONALLY CONTACTED MATSUURA, ET. AL, PRIOR TO MR BELL'S ARRIVAL AND STRONGLY URGED THAT MHW TAKE SOME NEW ACTION TOWARD RESOLUTION SUBJECT PROBLEM. MATSUURA THEN WENT TO MHW VICE MIN AND KEY SCIENTISTS OF FSIC. FINAL CONCLUSION WAS TO QUIETLY HAVE ACRRRI DO RESEARCH AS EXPLAINED ABOVE. MAF OFFICIAL ASSURED AGATT THAT TOP JAPANESE SCIENTISTS INVOLVED ARE CONFIDENT THAT RESULTS OF RESEARCH WILL BE FAVORABLE TO APPROVAL OF CHEMICALS.

7. CAUTION: MHW WILL PROBABLY ON SURFACE TAKE ATTITUDE THAT ACRRRI DECIDED TO DO RESEARCH ON THEIR OWN INITIATIVE, NOT REPEAT NOT AT MHW OR FSIC REQUEST. THIS TO AVOID POSSIBLE BAD PRESS WHICH WOULD PROBABLY ACCUSE MHW OF BENDING RULES UNDER U.S. PRESSURE. HENCE, DETAILS RE THIS CHANGE IN MHW APPROACH SHOULD BE KEPT IN STRICTEST CONFIDENCE.
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